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ART. XI. — CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — *The Debate between the Church and Science ; or, The Ancient Hebraic Idea of the Six Days of Creation. With an Essay on the Literary Character of Tayler Lewis.* Andover : Warren F. Draper. 1860. 12mo. pp. 437.

WE wish in this notice to state concisely our impressions of an important and remarkable book. It is printed anonymously, no clew whatever being given to the name of the author, and no hint of his station, condition, or residence. Even the publisher is unable to tell whose book it is that he is publishing. Heralded by no previous announcements and advertised sparingly, it has taken us by surprise ; and for our judgment concerning it we are indebted to no “ notices of the press.” The half-polemic character of the opening chapters, which vindicate Tayler Lewis against the assaults of his scientific and clerical critics, will have no attraction for the mass of readers, to whom Lewis and the criticisms upon him are alike unknown, and by whom the controversy, if it ever had interest, is almost forgotten. A book on such a theme, issued so quietly and obscurely, by a wholly unknown writer, is not likely to receive much attention in the crowd of showy publications, on exciting themes, by noted men. It will be slow in finding its public and its admirers ; but it will be sure to find them in the end. The author of so solid and ingenious a work can afford to wait for its appreciation, and to trust time in giving it its dues.

The first impression which the volume has given us is of a certain *chivalry* and nobleness. The writer comes in to defend his friend from what he deems unjust treatment on the part of those who ought to be friends. An unknown champion, with visor down, steps into the lists to defy the faithless band who have betrayed the leader whom they should have sustained. Lewis, disappointed and saddened by the attacks which nominal brethren have made upon him, finds here suddenly a defender whose name he cannot even conjecture, — one who not only adopts his views, and is ready to do battle for them, but who will uphold his motives and honor his genius, where others deny that he has a right to be heard. It is rare that exactly such an instance is met in literature, of an unknown writer appearing as the champion of one who has not asked his aid, — appearing, without fee or reward, against writers so distinguished as the critics of Professor Lewis. Whatever may be thought of the merits of the controversy, there can be no dispute as to the knightly generosity of one who comes so boldly forward in behalf of his friend.

The next impression which the volume has given us is of a pervading *modesty*. Dogmatic and positive as it frequently is, it is modest throughout. The same feeling which has kept the author's name from the title-page has led to the suppression of all personality from the course of the argument. Even the convenient plural "*we*," under which an author may shelter his egotism, is too conspicuous for this author, and he constantly uses the impersonal form when he is expressing his own opinions. This over-modesty, as we think, injures the volume in giving to it a too abstract character, and depriving it of some of that human interest which it ought to wear. "It is thought" and "it is believed" are, in our judgment, poor substitutes for "we think" and "we believe," and, in the long run, excessive diffidence in a writer annoys the reader almost as much as excessive confidence. If modesty of style, however, be a virtue, it is redundant in this book upon the "Church and Science"; and it is all the more welcome here, because it is not usual in works on such themes. Scientific reasoners are rarely careful to hide their personality, and usually claim full merit for their discoveries, and an individual right to be heard.

An impression equally strong which the volume gives is that of *reverence*. Its tone is that of deep, sincere, and devout belief in God, in his providence and in his revelation. There is a sense of solemn responsibility in dealing with such mysterious truths; and in dissecting a verbal record, the writer never forgets that this is the "Word of God." There is an undertone of awe and wonder, even in the closest critical discussion. We feel that prayer, rather than controversy, is the congenial attitude of this mind, and that it loves more to muse upon and adore the infinite marvels of creation and of redemption, than to gain any victory in argument. Firm as the logical fabric is, it throbs all along with a tremulous piety, and we constantly expect that the discourse will break into praise, and become a psalm.

Then there is the impression which the volume gives of extraordinary *patience*, both in thought and composition. The argument moves on leisurely, though never languidly. The thought seems to have been tried over and over again, and tested in every way, before it was intrusted to manuscript. In no chapter, from beginning to end of the volume, is there any mark of haste or of crudeness of thought. The author has given us nothing which he has not taken ample time to digest,—which he has not settled in his own mind. The style of thought is at the farthest possible remove from that of ordinary periodical literature. It is, in the best sense of the words, slow, grave, and measured,—not by any means prolix, but deliberate to an unusual de-

gree. Such patient thinking most fitly belongs to a discussion of this kind. Hurry, with such a theme, were unpardonable.

Exactness of reasoning is another undeniable feature of the volume. While the subject and the learning brought to bear upon it would indicate a theological training, the method is rather that of the lawyer than of the theologian. There is scrupulousness in weighing evidence, — a constant recurrence to the first proposition, a frequent repetition of the points already proved, and a rejection of all superfluous details, which show a mind disciplined to legal inquiries, and familiar with the practice of courts. The writer's fervor never carries him on into looseness of statement or doubtful assertions. He shows reasons for all the positions which he thinks necessary to his argument. The logical fulness, rather than the rhetorical finish, of his volume has evidently occupied his mind; yet there is no want in the volume of rhetorical beauty. Fine passages abound, and are all the more pleasant because the author does not seem to have known how fine they are. There is an unconscionable eloquence in many of the arguments, which is very captivating. If the author is somewhat sparing of illustrations, those which he gives are tasteful and appropriate. The structure of his sentences shows familiarity with, and fondness for, the old English writers; and some of the pages close a long discussion with a sentence of Miltonic grandeur, in which we hold our breath as we read. His style indicates a well-trained thinker, rather than a practised writer. It is not always well balanced, and, especially in the First Part, is injured by inaccuracy in the use of the smaller words. There is sometimes an annoying confusion of pronouns, which compels us to guess the meaning. This defect, however, disappears as we proceed in the volume, and the principal fault which we have to find with the Second and Third Parts is an occasional obscurity, resulting rather from the abstruseness of the ideas than from any intricacy of words.

The *learning* of the volume, though not paraded in any fulness of notes or references, is yet quite sufficient for the purposes of the argument. The author has evidently studied carefully the various authorities, and has acquainted himself with the works which bear indirectly or remotely upon the point at issue. He is familiar with the history of the Church, is well versed in the ancient Greek, and is a nice critic of the Biblical dialect, which he does not hesitate to set above the tongue of Plato and Demosthenes. He is able to point out the shades of meaning in the Hebrew verbs; and we should find it hard to decide, from his allusions, whether Natural Science or Biblical Philology were his favorite study. In both his scholarship is accurate and satisfactory.

One more merit of the volume we mention, its wonderful *suggestiveness*. It starts so many trains of thought, that we find ourselves, in reading, perpetually sent off from the main line upon new routes. It awakens continual meditation, and brings the reader into sympathy with that musing mood which, he feels sure, must be the mood of the writer. Even those who quite reject his conclusions, and are not convinced by his arguments, will find his striking remarks very fruitful in arousing new thought. We have marked scores of pointed sentences, which, taken separately, might become the texts of essays, — of sentences which seem to condense months of reading and observation.

The volume is in three Parts. The First Part is devoted to the examination of the series of critical articles in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, upon Professor Tayler Lewis's "Six Days of Creation." Of this Part it is not proper for us here to say more than that it shows conclusively that Lewis was not fully understood by his critics, and, as a consequence, not fairly treated. The Second Part of the volume is a full discussion of the question at issue between the Church and the geologists, in which the writer maintains that the Biblical account, in the very meaning of its terms, implies and contains what science has since discovered, and that the popular interpretation of that account is not philologically correct, nor in accordance with ancient scholarship. This part of the book deserves the careful attention of all who desire to see the strife between Scripture and Science ended. Nevertheless, we are afraid that the author's enthusiastic hope will not be realized, and that men will still continue to see opposition where he sees harmony. The Third Part of the volume is an "Essay on the Literary Character of Tayler Lewis." The position of Lewis as a scholar, a thinker, a reasoner, and a writer is stated, and the various spheres of his intellectual activity are described, with very copious extracts from his writings, and a summary of his principal opinions. While we cordially assent to the writer's general estimate of Professor Lewis, and sympathize with much of his panegyric, we cannot fully accept the estimate given us of Lewis's future influence, nor do we think that his defects as a reasoner are quite fairly presented.

In closing this notice of a striking and most valuable book, so mysteriously sent forth, we can only express the hope that its success and influence may be equal to its real merit.